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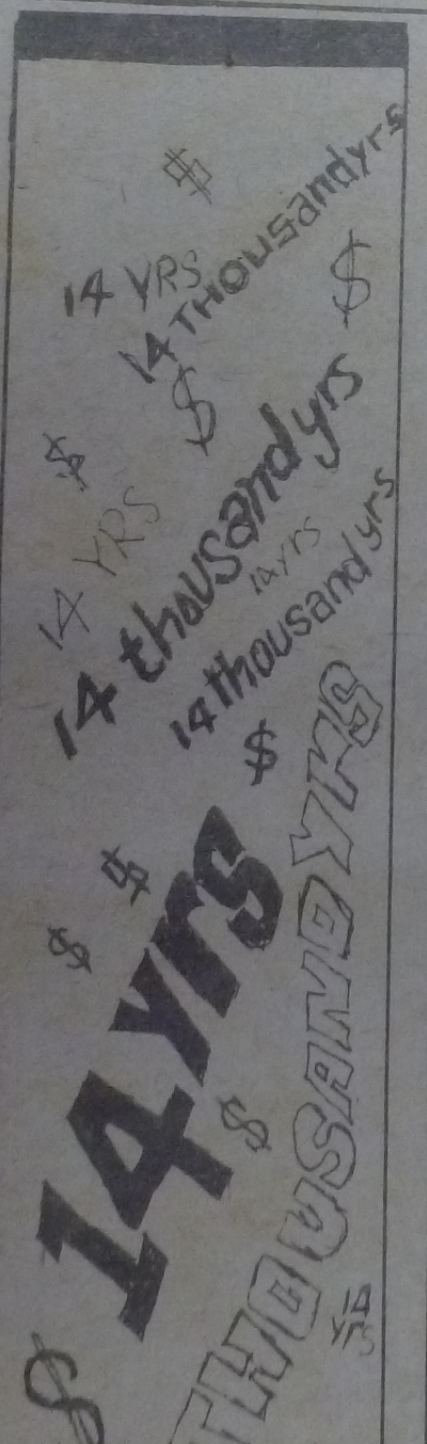
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BLACK ANGER

by FRANK LEE

Many of us behave as the ostrich burying our heads in the sand with our tails in the air so that we refuse to see the true significance of the recent Black Power demonstrations. The black legend of ignorance, misery and tyranny is now being exploded. A new age of reform is setting in. The administrative system, the commercial and economic systems are now being overhauled. Massa day must not only appear to be done but must be really done. PNM "progress" and "well-being" have not produced a spirit of contentment among the people, even after 14 years. So now there is plenty revolutionary tinder scattered about the country, ready to be ignited.

The Black Power movement today is as relevant to Trinidad as to anywhere else which experiences Trinidad's problems. The problem is not so much one of race but one of colour, black or white, and black is any colour that is not white.

Unlike other groups black men did not come to the West Indies, especially Trinidad and Tobago, because they wanted to come. They came here by force, in chains, and enslaved, or otherwise indentured. They were taught how to be Massa's boy, how to be subservient. Today after many years after slavery and indentureship, black men find that they are in the majority and so too are their sufferings. The West Indian dream is a lie. Other people came here because

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*End of a Decade End of an Era

PAUL HERBERT

have been dim. Without much more real commitment to the meaningful integration of the West Indies, there was little that any West Indian government could honestly agree with the other. The Bank, the University, CARIFTA and BWIA continued to subsist like so many waifs waiting upon the West Indian political leadership for succour. In fact the Bank and BWIA were much nearer the garbage heap than was popularly realized, and if they suffered such a fate then their own demise would surely have spelt the doom of all other regional enterprises.

■

As it turned out the Conference was only moderately successful. Judged by results it had accomplished very little. Not much had been settled. BWIA had been recognized as having "special claims" to be the regional air carrier, but that was a far cry from being designated as such. A Working Party had been set up and instructed to submit a report to the Governments on the matter not later than May 1, 1969. Jamaica's position on the Bank remained virtually unchanged as did her position on nearly everything else. A Conference communique had said that the Bank was to be set up as soon as possible; but Jamaica had reserved her position till May 31. Even so, it seemed likely that a Jamaican decision would merely serve to re-open the whole issue from the beginning as to the other Governments. Despite all the guarded and diplomatic phrases used to describe the Jamaican conditions, it was obvious that a crisis point had been reached. After a year or thereabouts, CARIFTA was very much in the toils. To say that there were conflicting interests was not to say enough; it was beginning to look as if there were irreconcilable conflicting interests. BWIA, the Bank, CARIFTA the University and the position of the smaller islands were all thorny problems to be resolved before the high hopes placed in CARIFTA by the establishment Caribbean interests could have a chance of ever being realized.

ready called "new arrangements".

■

That, in fact, was precisely what happened in the ensuing months. In the period after February, the great West Indian mystery related to the details of the Jamaican conditions for participating in the Bank which Jamaica had lost little time in confidentially communicating

BY JAMES MILLETTE

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they wanted to come. They saw riches. They saw hopes. The era 1956 to 1970 raised, then crushed the hopes of the black man. Today these black political leaders are quaking in their boots. They could not imagine that the Black Power movement could have mobilized over 20,000 people in the streets daily, 20,000 people who now feel betrayed by their present black political leaders.

It takes no magician to find out what the Black Power movement is against. They are against a government that is corrupt and white-oriented.

They are against the fact that ministers can build sets of flats, own farms with lands belonging to the country, have shares in private companies for which they shall further get IDC loans while the black man is still poor and in want.

They are against the fact that firms which get government grants and pioneer status can still make jams with 80% of it being sugar and have the gall to pay black people $12.00 a week.

They are against those companies which are in the majority white and which keep their workers like "puppets on a string." They employ the workers as casual workers and when their period of probation is nearing to a close, the workers are fired and then hired again.

They are against the fact that of the 50,000 people unemployed, there is one thing in common they are all basically black.

They are against the fact that 30% of the unemployed are within the age range 16–24 and they have three common characteristics in that they are all young, all educated and all black.

They are against taxi drivers who exploit the blackman by refusing to carry him directly to Port-of-Spain on a morning but drop him off at Tunapuna, Curepe, and San Juan and pick him up again for Port-of-Spain at considerably higher fares overall.

They are against an education system which says that "Trinidad does not owe the black man a living."

BLACK ANGER

Further more they are against an education system that is timid and stagnant, that causes boredom, excessive anxiety and a hatred for learning, that crushes imagination and individuality and that is highly irrelevant to the great issues of our time in that it does not help young black people to live in, cope with or constructively change the world they have inherited. They are even against the fact that after some 13 months ASJA Muslim school in San Fernando still cannot get a Principal. There are others.

They are against the fact that this country today is wholly controlled by the monied interests which are in the main WHITE. They are against the fact that government and government decisions are designed to enhance the present power of these interests which are basically concerned with PROFITS and not the life of the BLACK MAN.

They are against the fact that HEALTH facilities are still regarded as a privilege and not as a RIGHT to the black man. The health services have utterly failed in their responsibility to the black man. To date there is no comprehensive attack on all the social and economic conditions which breed proverty and illness. A government which maintains economic and political power in the hands of a few whites and sociological whites cannot end the black man's frustrations.

They are against a legal system which does not preserve the dignity and freedom of the black man, a system in which disputes seem to be settled less in an atmosphere of justice and more in one of privilege, a system in which because a man pleaded guilty for obstruction in Port-of-Spain on Saturday March 7th a Chief Magistrate reprimands and discharges him "for speaking the truth", tacitly inferring of course that the other 11 men who pleaded "not guilty" are not speaking the truth. Prejudgment. The same can be said about the cases of the Black Power leaders now on trial.

They are against the Trinidad "culture" which alienates and dehumanizes our society the Jaycees show for example. They are against political hypocrites, some of whom have written such books as "Negro in The Caribbean" and "Education in the BWI", and who after 14 years in the political saddle are now about setting up a Committee to search for "black dignity" which explains why Butler has to this day been denied an award. These are some of the things that the Black Power movement is against. Later we will have to discuss some of the things they are for.

THE ORIGINS OF AFRO INDIAN UNITY IN TRINIDAD Part II

THE EARLY STAGES OF "THE FIRST LIBERATION MOVEMENT."

by Mahatma Chitimukulu

BUT the early efforts of the Colonial exploiters to split the TWA along racial lines were un-successful. Instead these three pioneers attacked the unjust government in the Leg Co. and in the Port-of-Spain City Council (where Cipriani was Mayor), hoping to bring about changes that would benefit the masses whom they had pledged to represent. But the odds were stacked against them.

The masses who had placed so much hope in their three pioneers were getting increasingly disillusioned. Ordinance. On both occasions the Governor refused. In 1930 they asked for increased representation of the masses on the Leg Co but the Governor did not consider the time to be ripe.

Although it made provision for the Legal Organization of Trade Unions, it did not permit peaceful picketing, nor did it give protection to the union against being sued by the employers. Cipriani refused to accept the law as it stood and dissolved the TWA creating the Trinidad Labour Party (TLP) instead.

ned his faith on the British Colonials and their "Consitutionalism" the oil worker, canecutters and labourers suffered from starvation wages. In addition they had to face daily insults from the dominant minority whites who considered themselves to be cultured and considered all non-whites to be 'primitive' – and told them so.

Finally, as Butler and Rienzi had long predicted, the workers defied Cipriani's Constitutionalism and staged a spontaneous strike at Apex Oilfields in March 1935. Cipriani,

thusiastically joined in their march by equally exploited sugar workers. When it became evident that the mass of workers at Couva would join the demonstration, the Colonial Governor sent Cipriani to that Town to stop the march. He did this by promising them that they would meet the Governor to present their grievances. (So "stooges" are not new to Trinidad either). When they saw the